



THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ON AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

ADDRESSING CITIZENS' CONCERNS



SPECIAL-NEEDS BOY SCOUT SUMMER CAMP

The City of Birmingham's Office of Americans with Disabilities partnered with the Boy Scouts of America of Central Alabama, Ruffner Mountain and CAWACO, Cahaba, Warrior, Coosa Rivers, to sponsor Birmingham's first area Special Needs Nature Camp for boys and girls with disabilities. The camp was made possible with a \$5,500 grant from CAWACO and gave participants the opportunity to learn about nature, experience camping, hiking, fishing, create arts and crafts, learn about fire safety and more. Special thanks to the Birmingham Fire Department that spoke with participants about fire safety. Ruffner Mountain offers year round activities for youth and families of all abilities and was the perfect nature setting. The camp culminated with a fishing outing at Eastlake Park. Although the "big one got away", the youth are already talking about the next camp. Many disabilities are not always visible and people with cognitive disabilities sometimes tend to be shy and withdrawn. The camping experience and one on one activities caused some students who were withdrawn to open up in a way that even surprised parents. If there is a success story, this was it. Discussion for plans are already in progress for the 2016 camp and we are looking for sponsors to expand opportunities for these youth. To become a sponsor call the City of Birmingham's Office of Americans with Disabilities at 254-2079.



INSIDE STORIES

Birmingham Adds Features to Make Park Accessible	2
Making Built Environments Accessible	2
Summertime is Fun Time	3
16 Communities Receive Grants	3
ADA Facts	4



BIRMINGHAM CITY ADDS FEATURES TO MAKE PARK ACCESSIBLE



The City of Birmingham is committed to making facilities, programs, services, and parks accessible for visitors and employees with disabilities through compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The accessibility of services within parks is also covered under all applicable federal, state, and local laws. The City of Birmingham works to ensure that people with disabilities can participate in the same programs and activities available to those without disabilities in the most integrated setting possible: from adding connecting paths at Rhodes and Rush-ton Parks, to a poured in place play surface area at Bessie Estelle Park and other parks. An accessible and inclusive playground means it is as easy for everyone to access play equipment regardless of their abilities or disabilities. Now, more than ever, to meet ADA requirements due to community pressure, playgrounds are being built with a focus on accessibility and usability. Alternative means of accessing facilities, programs, or services are provided only when an

accessible direct experience cannot be provided. If you live or visit the Birmingham area you may have noticed that Birmingham is on the move to becoming a more accessible city.

MAKING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT ACCESSIBLE

The ADA's regulations and the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, originally published in 1991, set the minimum standard for what makes a facility accessible. The Standards are used when determining if a public entity's programs or services are accessible under the ADA. However, they apply differently depending on whether the entity is providing access to programs or services in existing facilities altering an existing facility or building a new facility.

Access to Programs and Services in Existing Facilities

Public entities have an ongoing obligation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs and services because facilities are unusable or inaccessible to them. There is no "grandfather clause" in the ADA that exempts older facilities. However, the law strikes a careful balance between increasing access for people with disabilities and recognizing the constraints many public entities face. It allows entities confronted with limited financial resources to improve accessibility without excessive expense. Structural changes are not required where other solutions are feasible. However, where other solutions are not feasible, structural changes are required. When structural change is the method chosen to make a program or service accessible, the changes must meet the requirements of the 2010 ADA.

SUMMERTIME IS FUN TIME

Looking for accessible attractions within the City of Birmingham? Here are some that are wheelchair accessible and within driving distance for fun-filled adventure:

Red Mountain Park offers trails and the Mega-Zip, an accessible zip-line that is appropriate for any ability level. A NO-MAD (all terrain type of wheelchair) was recently donated to the park and is free to use if it is booked on the Red Mountain Park website. There are many other adventures available.



Oak Mountain State Park has a wheelchair accessible fishing pier, accessible cabin rentals and picnic pavilions with accessible tables.

The Birmingham Botanical Gardens is ADA compliant and offers more than 12,000 different plants including rose gardens, wildflower gardens, a Japanese garden with a teahouse, and southern Living Gardens.

The Birmingham Zoo offers accessible animal watching and daily shows such as the Red Diamond Sea Lion Splash Show and the Wildlife show. Wheelchair rentals are available in the gift shop.

16 COMMUNITIES RECEIVE GRANTS TO PURSUE INNOVATIVE MOBILITY SOLUTIONS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES

As part of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Rides to Wellness initiative, the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) has announced nearly \$400,000 in competitive grants to 16 communities to better connect residents with health care services. About 3.6 million Americans miss or delay medical appointments every year because they lack transportation to health care. Rides to Wellness aims to connect people to the health care they need, thereby improving outcomes for patients and reducing healthcare costs. "We are working to remove barriers for people to get to regular check-ups, even if they don't have access to a car. Public transportation is key to making health care accessible." We were proud to see Lakeshore Foundation, Birmingham, AL, as one of the recipients of the Innovative Mobility Grant. Lakeshore is a 501(C3) non-profit organization which serves people with physical disabilities throughout Alabama, across the country and around the world. Since 1984, Lakeshore has helped advance and promote the impact of positive, long-term physical and emotional effects of physical fitness on people with disabilities. This grant will ensure access to therapeutic physical care for many people with dis-



How to contact us:

Linda Coleman, ADA Director

Phone: 205-254-2079

E-mail:

linda.coleman@birminghamal.gov

LaQuita Cade, ADA Adm. Asst.

laquita.cade@birminghamal.gov

205-714-8683

Fax 205-297-8303

ADA Advisory meets bi-monthly

second Friday

10:00 AM 2nd Floor, City Hall

www.birminghamal.gov



Working to Open Doors to

Accessible City Services

ADA Advisory Committee

Chair – John Duplessis— SSTE Employment Program

Xaveria Anderson - Ms. Wheelchair Alabama 2007

Wendy Hicks— VA Medical Center

Lorine Kelly—MAX Transit (VIP Para transit)

Dan Kessler, Director- Disability Rights and Resources

Graham Sisson— Governor's Office on Disabilities (GOOD)

Yolanda Spencer- Alabama Department of Rehab Services

Myra Shamburger- Alabama Department of Rehab Services

Maria Lyas-Young - Birmingham City Schools

Greg Silas, Emergency 911

Kathy Lovell- ADA Disability Manager, Regions Bank

Michelle Belcher – Manager Liz Low Vision Center

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA) FACTS

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is one of the most comprehensive Civil Rights laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. The Act was established to promote equal opportunities for persons living with disabilities into all aspects of daily life. To be covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act as a person living with a disability, one must identify him/herself with one of the following definitions: a person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a person with a record of such a physical or mental impairment; or a person who is regarded as having such impairment. ADA was constructed into four major "Titles"- each centered on a systemic category of accessibility. Title I – Employment , Title II – Public (Governmental entities), Title III – Public Accommodations (Businesses), and Title IV – Telecommunications. This symbol is recognized worldwide as the ***International Symbol of Access (ISA)***.

